

**FORTIFICATIONS ON STATEN ISLAND.**

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**MESSAGE**

FROM THE

**PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,**

WITH SUNDRY DOCUMENTS, RELATING TO

**A PROPOSITION BY THE STATE OF NEW YORK,**

TO

**SELL TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE U. STATES,**

THE

**FORTIFICATIONS**

ERECTED BY SAID STATE, ON STATEN ISLAND.

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**JANUARY 15, 1827.**

Read, and referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.

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**WASHINGTON:**

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON

1827.

U. S. GOVERNMENT  
PRINTING OFFICE

[1892 No. 12]

THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE UNITED STATES

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS ON STATE DEPARTMENT

# MESSAGE

TO THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AND SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

A PROPOSITION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

## DECLARATION

OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 12, 1892

AND THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

PRINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States :*

WASHINGTON, January, 1827.

I communicate to Congress a letter from the Secretary of War, together with a report of the Chief Engineer, and certain acts of the Legislature of the State of New York, proposing to the Government of the United States the purchase of the fortifications erected at the expense of the State, on Staten Island, with the ordnance and other apparatus belonging to, or connected with, the same. These papers were prepared at the close of the last Session of Congress, at too late a period to be then acted upon.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.



## WAR DEPARTMENT,

*May 17, 1826.*

SIR : At the request of Colonel William King, the Agent of the State of New York, appointed by the Governor of that State to negotiate with the United States for the sale and transfer to them of the fortifications erected by the State on Staten Island during the last war, for the defence of the harbor of New York, I have the honor to lay before you an estimate of the actual cost of these fortifications and of the lands belonging to them ; and, also, a return of the quantity of ordnance and ordnance stores, and a sketch of those fortifications ; with a report upon the subject, of the Chief Engineer.

Colonel King is desirous that these documents may be communicated to Congress at the present session, in order that the subject may claim the early attention of Congress at their next meeting, as the State of New York wishes to transfer the property alluded to as early as possible, and the principle to be settled on which the Government will receive it. With some modifications and improvements, these works enter into the system of defence adopted by the Board of Engineers for the harbor of New York, and it is therefore desirable that the United States should possess them as early as practicable.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect, Sir,

Your obedient servant.

JAMES BARBOUR.

To JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,

*President of the United States.*





NEW YORK, *May 3, 1826.*

SIR : In compliance with instructions received from your excellency, I proceeded to Staten Island to make a survey of the property owned there by this State. A map of this survey exhibiting the boundaries of the land, and a horizontal projection of the forts and other buildings upon it, is herewith submitted. These fortifications were examined some years since by a Board of United States' Engineers, and their report is in the War Department at Washington ; to which recourse may be had for more detailed information respecting them.

I have also the honor to submit to your Excellency a copy of an estimate of the value of the stone work of the Fortifications made some time since by Arthur Smith, builder, and John Morse, mason of this city, both men of high reputation for integrity and mechanical skill. The original estimate is believed to be in the United States War Department. To this estimate is attached the price of the land, which, from its situation, is considered highly valuable ; and an exhibit of the sums respectively paid for labor, carpenters work, timber, iron work, superintendence, miscellaneous expenses, wharf, block house, and the value of the well in Fort Tompkins. This well, which is 142 feet deep, affords a never failing supply of pure and wholesome water, four feet deep. These sums have been ascertained from the account books kept by General Morton, formerly clerk of the Commissioners of the Fortifications.

The Commissary General's inventories of ordnance belonging to this State, on Staten and Governor's Islands, are also herewith submitted.

I am not aware, Sir, that any further material information can be furnished on this subject.

Very respectfully your Excellency's humble Servant,  
SALEM DUTCHER, JR.

HIS EXC'Y DEWITT CLINTON.

**TO FORT TOMPKINS.**

Stone walls, circular faced, with drove ashler blocks,	121,310 cubic feet at 36 cts. per foot,	is	\$43,671 60
Do do faced with drove ashler,	131,754 do 30 do		39,526 20
Do do faces well hammered,	44,640 do 22 do		9,820 80
Do do over brick arches,	51,030 } do 20 do		23,348 60
Do do to foundations,	65,713 }		
Brick work to arches,	42,477 do 40 do		16,990 80
Coping 6 inches thick,	5,605 superficial, 87½ do		4,904 37½
			<hr/> 138,262 37½

**TO FORT RICHMOND.**

Stone walls, circular faced with drove ashler blocks,	42,760 cubic feet at 32 cts. per foot,	is	\$13,683 20
Do do Magazine and foundations	24,242 do 20 do		4,848 40
Brick Walls, - - - -	3,406 do 36 do		1,226 16
Coping of five inches thick - - -	4,025 sup. ft. } 50 do		2,310 50
Do three inches thick - - -	596 do }		
Extra cost to 20 embrasures, at 30 dollars each, is	- - - -		810 00
			<hr/> 22,878 26

**TO FORT HUDSON.**

Stone wall, hammered, &c. laid against a bank,	28,400 cubic feet, at 22 cts. per foot,	is	\$6,248 00
Coping, 4 inches thick, in superficial feet,	1,420 at 50 cents, is		710 00
			<hr/> 6,958 00



# MATERIALS ON HAND.

Six inch coping for three towers and one curtain, well worked and fit for laying,	3,930 cubic feet at 75 cts. per foot, is	-	-	2,947	50
500 loads of building stone, at \$ 1 per load,	-	-	-	500	00

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\$ 171,546 00½

Value of land, 49½ acres, at \$ 400 per acre,	-	-	-	-	-	19,800	00
Labor, as per account books,	-	-	-	-	-	85,020	82
Timber do.	-	-	-	-	-	31,148	49
Carpenter's work do.	-	-	-	-	-	14,965	70
Iron work do.	-	-	-	-	-	9,102	00
Superintendence do.	-	-	-	-	-	9,424	20
Miscellaneous expenses do.	-	-	-	-	-	8,286	21
Wharf do.	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	00
Block house within Fort Tompkins,	-	-	-	-	-	6,000	00
Well in Fort Tompkins, 142 feet deep at \$ 4 per foot	-	-	-	-	-	568	00

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Sum total, \$ 358,861 55½

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[Doc. No. 49.]

*An Inventory of the ordnance and munitions of war, the property of the State of New York, at the Fortifications on Staten Island, taken in the month of December, 1825.*

25 Iron 32 pounder ordnance,	}	mounted,
2 do. 24 do.		
42 do. 24 do.	}	dismounted.
1 do. 32 do.		

42 Garrison carriages, out of order,  
 42 Pent Houses,  
 54 Rammers and spongers,  
 40 Ladles and 60 worms,  
 100 Battery handspikes,  
 50 Iron crowbars,  
 9 Logger heads,  
 50 Beds and quoins,  
 1 sling or dibble carriage,  
 1 small truck, 10 truck wheels,  
 A quantity of wads,  
 3,833 Round shot for 24 pounders, }  
 1,655 do. for 32 do. }

6 Powder horns,  
 6 Gunner's belts,  
 6 Gimlets, 6 priming wires,  
 6 Port fire stocks,  
 6 Lint stocks,

I certify the above to be a true inventory of the property belonging to the State of New York, at the fortifications on Staten Island, taken December 20th, 1825.

ALEXANDER M. MUIR,  
*Commissary General.*

*A Memorandum of Ordnance, &c. belonging to the State of New York, deposited in Fort Columbus, Governor's Island.*

13 Iron 32 pounders ordnance, with carriage, &c. complete.

Dated New York, December 20th, 1825.

ALEXANDER M. MUIR.  
*Commissary General, S. N. F.*

## ENGINEER DEPARTMENT,

*Washington, May 17, 1826.*

SIR : In obedience to your instructions, I have examined the estimate of the cost of the fortifications on Staten Island, and of the lands connected with them, furnished by the Agent of the State of New York, in compliance with the request contained in your letter of the 18th of November, 1825, addressed to John D. Hammond, Esq. at that time the Agent, which fortifications the State of New York had offered to transfer to the United States, under acts of the Legislature, passed in February and March, 1818, copies of which are enclosed ; and I find only a general estimate of their actual cost, which, exclusive of ordnance, amounts to \$358,861 55 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

If it is the intention of the Government to pay for these works at their real cost, the accompanying statement from the books of the Commissioners of Fortifications must be received as the evidence of their cost ; but if the works and lands attached to them are to be paid for at their present value, it would be proper that the Department should ascertain their real value, by actual admeasurement of the walls, and an estimate founded on the present price of materials and workmanship, and of the lands, which would require considerable time, and could not be effected before the adjournment of the present Congress.

The works, with some modifications, come within the plans projected by the Board of Engineers for the permanent defence of the harbor of New York, and they ought, in my opinion, with the lands, to be acquired by the United States.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir, your obedt. servant,  
ALEXANDER MACOMB, *Chief Eng.*

HON. JAMES BARBOUR,  
*Secretary of War.*

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*AN ACT respecting the settlement of the demands of this State against the United States, and for other purposes.*

Passed, February 10, 1818.

I. Be it enacted by the People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, That the person administering the Government of this State is hereby authorized to appoint an Agent, with full power to adjust and settle the demands of this State against the United States.

II. And be it further enacted, That it shall and may be lawful for the person administering the Government of this State, to institute a negotiation with the Government of the United States, for the sale of the fortifications and buildings belonging to this State at the Narrows, on Staten Island, and the lands connected therewith, and to report the same to the Legislature for their consideration.

III. And be it further enacted, That the said Agent shall obey such instructions as he shall receive, from time to time, from the person administering the Government of this State, in relation to the powers given him by this act, and shall also perform such further services as shall be enjoined on him by the person administering the Government as aforesaid for the attainment of the objects contemplated by the next preceding section.

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*AN ACT to amend the act, entitled "An act respecting the settlement of the demands of this State against the United States, and for other purposes."*

Passed, March 19, 1818.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, That the person administering the Government of this State is hereby further authorized to institute a negotiation with the Government of the United States, for the sale of the ordnance and other apparatus belonging to, or connected with, the fortifications belonging to this State, at the Narrows, on Staten Island, and to report the same to the Legislature, at the next session, for their consideration.

STATE OF NEW YORK, }  
Secretary's Office. }

I certify the preceding to be a true copy of an original act of the Legislature of this State on file in this office.

ARCHD. CAMPBELL, *Dep. Secretary.*

ALBANY, March 19, 1818.